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Region III

Oil Program Activities

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FEATURE

THE MILLENNIUM BUG AND YEAR 2000 COMPLIANCE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been working collaboratively over the past few months with many associations which have an interest in the Year 2000 computer date problems and how the nation's drinking water and wastewater utilities are resolving it.

Y2K, the Year 2000 or the "Millennium Bug" computer problem could adversely affect the operations of the nation's drinking water and wastewater systems if it is not corrected. The Year 2000 issue is a potential problem for these systems because many of them use computers and equipment with embedded computer chips. If action is not taken now, the bug could affect drinking water and wastewater operations, leading to public health and environmental problems.

The arrival of this Millennium Bug could affect any computer and any kind of date-active device or software. Some computers and equipment will "crash"; others will operate erroneously; others may simply stop and need to be restarted; some may create corrupt data that will be assumed valid because it will be readily detected; and some may continue to operate correctly.

While much of the United States population is aware that a Year 2000 computer problem exists, many people have not yet focused on what impact the problem might have upon them personally, or on their place of work or business.

If your utility is not dealing with the problem yet, it may be necessary to promote awareness across the entire organization and all levels of leadership, including operating staff, supervisors, upper managers, and corporate or public officials.

Owners and operators of facilities should carefully evaluate the public health and environmental impact of plant failure during testing. They should take steps to prevent failure and mitigate resulting adverse impacts if testing activity fails. All testing plans, procedures and results should be thoroughly documented for internal Y2K contingency planning.

For further information on the Y2K problems, check out the following websites:

<http://www.y2k.gov/java/index.htm> (Pres. Y2 Council)

<http://www.epa.gov/year2000> (EPA)

<http://www.epa.gov/year2000/ow.htm> (EPA Water)

<http://itpolicy.gsa.gov> (Gen. Services Adm)

<http://www.dtic.mil/c2i/y2k/plan.html> (DOD)

<http://www.nist.gov/y2k/> (Dept. Of Commerce)

<http://www.gao.gov> (General Accounting Office)

<http://www.amsa.org> (Assoc. Of Metroplital Sewage)

<http://www.wef.org> (Water Environment Federation)

<http://www.amwa-water.org> (assoc. Of Metrop. Water)

<http://www.itaa.org> (Inf. Technology Assoc of America)

<http://www.wwema.org> (Water and Wastewater Equip Mfg)

<http://www.y2k.com> (private sector information)

Information taken from EPA 2000 Drinking Water and Wastewater Treatment Systems

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OHIO KANAWHA SPILL RESPONSE COUNCIL

In November the Ohio / Kanawha Spill Response Council (OKSRC) held their first general meeting as a non-profit, industrially based response council on the Ohio River Basin System, modeled after the "Three Rivers Pollution Response Council (TRPRC)". The OKSRC gives the responders a similar response system on the Ohio River downstream from the Hannibal Lock and Dam, which ends jurisdiction of the TRPRC.

The Ohio/Kanawha Spill Response Council is located in the Point Pleasant, West Virginia, and Gallipolis, Ohio, area and is covered under the United States Coast Guard's Eighth District and the Environmental Protection Agency's Regions III and V. This area encompasses the waters of the Ohio River from OR Mile 281 to just below the Racine Locks (OR Mile 238), and from the mouth of the Kanawha River to the Winfield Locks (KR Mile 31).

The OKSRC was formed in 1996 to address mutual concerns of the U.S. Coast Guard MSO Huntington and private industry. OKSRC provides support in the following areas: active membership, mutual aid, planning, educating, organizing, creating and overseeing exercises/drills, and representation in regulatory activities. Members include, but are not limited to marine vessel owners, and marine support businesses/facilities, and contractors.

The philosophies supporting the Ohio/Kanawha Spill Response Council are:

- Industry and regulator agencies will provide a network of effective and timely response to spill emergencies
- Necessary tools, material, and manpower will be available to member companies to insure rapid response assistance

By effectively combining resources of OKSRC members, the navigable waters within the designated response area will be protected in an efficient manner. A formal structure of response plans will be constructed by which organizations will pool available manpower and equipment resources, including specific personnel capabilities and expertise. Thus, the inception of the Ohio/Kanawha Spill Response Council, Inc. Succinctly, the Council will serve as an "insurance policy" from which one hopes never to collect, but certainly one which will pay off greatly if/when activated.

The OKSRC will prepare a formal manual containing by-laws, member addresses, river maps, relevant forms, and

most importantly, required equipment lists of all member companies along with a 24-hour emergency phone list. Pool Coordinators and backups will be assigned to each Lock & Dam Pool in the addressed area to assist the responsible party during an incident. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Navigational Charts will be utilized by the Council to sectionally divide (zone off) the area for better coordination both on the river and on shore. Access to the rivers from the land side and environmentally sensitive areas will be identified and permanently logged on these river maps. Most importantly, the OKSRC will be recognized as corporate and government leaders working as partners in a preventive capacity for mutual benefit.

Mock incidents will be planned and conducted to provide the Council and its members with readiness and education necessary to successfully handle actual spill incidents. Additionally, through continued training and sharing of experiences, OKSRC members, regulatory agencies, and surrounding communities will be better prepared for worst-case scenarios."

The U.S. EPA Region III, U.S. Coast Guard MSO Huntington, and the Three Rivers Group welcome the additional capability and wish them well in their continued effort to improve the response capability on this very important inland waterway.

SPILL INFORMATION

10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE EXXON VALDEZ

On the evening of March 23, 1989 the Exxon Valdez departed the Alyeska marine terminal in Valdez, Alaska, enroute to Los Angeles/Long Beach with 53,094,510 gallons of Prudhoe Bay (North Slope) crude oil. The 987 feet long, 166 feet wide and 88 feet deep vessel was two years old with a deadweight of 213,755 tons. It was built with eleven cargo tanks and seven protectively-located segregated ballast tanks in lieu of double bottoms.

The ship was under the control of its captain, the guidance of an Alaska state pilot, and monitored by the U.S. Coast Guard Vessel Traffic Service (VTS). The VTS monitors moving vessels by radar from Valdez and Potato Point. At 11:25pm, the captain advised the VTS that the pilot had departed. He further stated that the ship probably would leave the outbound traffic lane and cross the separation zone into the inbound lane in order to avoid ice. The next call from the ship stated that it was reducing speed to 12 knots to wind its way through some ice and that the VTS would be advised after the ice had been cleared.

The Exxon Valdez ran aground on Bligh Reef, Prince William Sound, Alaska, four minutes after midnight on Good Friday morning, March 24, 1989. At the time of the grounding, the Exxon Valdez was loaded to a draft of 56 feet. The charted depth where the vessel grounded was 30 feet at low tide. The severity of the grounding is attributed to the sound's rocky bottom, coupled with the vessel's momentum. Subsequent damage surveys showed that 8 of the 11 cargo tanks, extending the full length of the vessel, were torn open. Three salt-water ballast tanks also were pierced. A total of 11 tanks on the center and starboard side of the vessel were damaged. The enormous damage caused a rapid loss of cargo. Within five hours, 10.1 million gallons had been spilled.

UST PROGRAM

The federal underground storage tank (UST) regulations, effective December 22, 1988, require all regulated tank systems to be upgraded, replaced or closed by December 22, 1998.

Federal rules require that existing USTs have the following by **December 22, 1998**:

- Spill Protection
- Overfill Protection
- Corrosion Protection

You must choose one of the following actions for an existing UST:

- Add spill, overfill, and corrosion protection by December 22, 1998
- Close the existing UST by December 22, 1998

- Replace the closed existing UST with a new UST

If your existing USTs have not been upgraded or have not been properly closed by the 1998 deadline, you can be cited for violations and fined.

The requirements for underground storage tanks referred to in this article can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 280.

PLANNING INFORMATION

INLAND AREA CONTINGENCY PLAN NOW AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET

The Region III Inland Area Committee is comprised of federal, state and local officials. As mandated by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, its purpose is to prepare and maintain an Area Contingency Plan and work with state and local officials to enhance their contingency planning efforts and to assure preplanning of joint response efforts.

The Region III Inland Area Contingency Plan can now be found on the Internet at "<http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/iacp/r3iacp.htm>". Although the site is still under construction, information is now available. Fact sheets and GIS data and maps will be available in the future.

For additional information, contact the Region III Inland Area Committee Chairperson, Stephen Jarvela at (215) 814-3259.

PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES

MARATHON ASHLAND PETROLEUM SPILL EXERCISE, HUNTINGTON, WV

Marathon Ashland Petroleum hosted a large table top spill exercise in October in the Huntington, WV area attended by well over 200 personnel from numerous company, local, state and federal agencies. The exercise simulated the release of approximately 3,000 barrels of No. 6 heating fuel and coal tar light oil (80% benzene) into the Ohio River as a result of a barge accident at Marathon Ashland Petroleum's loaded fleet near Kenova, WV. The exercise was held October 26-29, 1998. The exercise was unique in that three different EPA Regions and States were affected by the simulated release. The exercise required coordination between several county emergency management agencies from different states, the states of West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky, EPA Regions 3, 4 and 5 and Coast Guard personnel from MSO-Huntington. A unified command structure was employed in responding to the incident. In addition to participation by EPA Regions 3 and 5, and the USCG, other federal agencies participating in the exercise included EPA-CID, OSHA, and NOAA.

REGION III RRT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled Region III RRT meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn, Old Town, Alexandria, VA on January 12-14, 1999. For further information, contact Linda Marzulli at (215) 814-3256.

POLLUTION PREVENTION CONFERENCE

The EPA Region III Pollution Prevention Roundtable's 1999 conference will be held in Baltimore, MD January 20-21, 1999. The public, business and industry are invited to attend to hear sessions focused on technical pollution prevention information and innovations affecting the Mid-Atlantic area.

The roundtable is comprised of federal, state and local government pollution prevention programs and other pollution prevention practitioners in Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

For registration information, contact Michele Russo at (202) 466-3908 or visit the conference website at <http://p2.org>.

INTERNATIONAL OIL SPILL CONFERENCE

The 1999 International Oil Spill Conference is being held at the Washington State Convention Center in the Emerald City of Seattle, Washington. The conference is scheduled for March 8-11, 1999.

Further information can be obtained at (202) 973-8689, or the website at www.iosc.org.

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SPCC/FRP OUTREACH MANUAL

HAVE YOU RECEIVED YOUR COPY OF EPA REGION III'S SPCC/FRP OUTREACH MANUAL?

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE A COPY PLEASE SEND OR FAX TO:

Betty Polkowski (3HS32)
U.S. EPA - Region III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Phone#: (215) 814-3102
Fax#: (215) 814-3254

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-SPCC/FRP Inspections and Plan Review

-SPCC Enforcement Support

-Outreach